

## BOOK REVIEWS

SHATOIYA DE LA TOUR and RICHARD DE LA TOUR. 2001. **The Herbalist's Garden: A Guided Tour of 10 Exceptional Herb Gardens: The People Who Grow Them and the Plants That Inspire Them.** (ISBN 1-58017-410-8, hbk.). Storey Publishing, 210 MASS MoCA Way, North Adams, MA, 01247. U.S.A. (**Orders:** # 67410, 1-800-441-5700; [www.storey.com](http://www.storey.com)). \$27.50, 229 pp., color photos, color illustrations, 8 3/8" × 10".

Herbalists and gardeners (or both) will enjoy this very readable coffee table-style book. The authors are a husband-and-wife team of passionate medicinal plant gardeners who also run an herb store. This book is a tour of the gardens of ten well-known herbal medicine experts, including James Duke, Rosemary Gladstar, and others. Each section includes the biographies of the gardeners and the history behind their gardens. The copious color photographs allow one to really step inside these calm retreats. A particular gem is the section on James Duke's "farmette" in Maryland. A renowned ethnobotanist and researcher, Dr. Duke's six-acre herb garden includes 80 plots, each centered on a specific health condition, such as cancer or respiratory conditions. Included in each section are lists of the gardeners' favorite plants, watercolor garden plans, medicinal tea recipes, and tips for growing your own medicinal plants.—*Marissa Oppel, MS, Herbarium Technician, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-4060, U.S.A.*

LONDA SCHIEBINGER. 2004. **Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World** (ISBN 0-674-01487-1, hbk.). Harvard University Press, 79 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138, U.S.A. (**Orders:** [www.hup.harvard.edu/index.html](http://www.hup.harvard.edu/index.html)). \$39.95, 320 pp., 20 black-and-white illustrations, 6 1/2" × 9 1/2".

This page-turner is a fascinating glimpse into the world of colonial bioprospecting during the "long eighteenth century." When botany was young, voyaging botanists and their assistants collected plants from the New World in a mad race to discover the most economically and medicinally useful plants. Colonial bioprospecting was a cut throat business involving botanical spies and pirates. The author presents an overview of this rough-and-tumble era, focusing on the voyaging botanists and those armchair botanists who stayed in Europe and had their plants collected by assistants, ship captains, and others. A botanical artist and scientist, Maria Sibylla Merian, was one of very female voyaging botanists during this time period. While in the Caribbean, Merian described the "peacock flower" and its use by slave women as an abortifascient. Schiebinger's carefully constructed history of this discovery and the reasons it never reached mainstream Europeans is an interesting portrait of European reproductive mores and the business of botany in the 1700s.—*Marissa Oppel, MS, Herbarium Technician, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-4060, U.S.A.*